

FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

OF THE

City of Newark, N. J.

OPENING EXERCISES

HELD IN THE

HALSEY STREET METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH,

Wednesday Evening, Oct. 16, 1889.



NEWARK, N. J.:

W. H. SHURTS, PRINTER, 874 & 876 BROAD ST.

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Mayor of Newark,

WM. N. BARRINGER,
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OPENING

OF

THE FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY.

The exercises attending the opening of the Free Public Library, October 16, 1889, in the city of Newark, N. J., brought together a large audience. The Halsey Street Methodist Episcopal Church was taxed to its utmost, many people finding themselves unable to get inside the building.

Soon after 8 o'clock Mr. Samuel J. Macdonald, a member of the Board of Trustees, stepped to the front of the platform and called the meeting to order. He said: "I regret to announce that Mayor Haynes, who was expected to preside and make the opening address, is unable to be present, and the duty devolves upon me. I do not intend to make an address, but it seems fitting that at the proper time I should say a few words for the Board of Trustees."

Rev. John Atkinson then offered the following prayer:

"O God, we acknowledge that from Thee cometh every good gift and every perfect gift. We have nothing which we do not receive from Thee. We thank Thee for the benefits that have come to us through Thy Gospel. Our Christian civilization is the product of Thy Church. We thank Thee for it. We bless Thee that Christianity not only purifies the soul but that it also awakens the mind. Wherever Thy Gospel goes there thought is roused and intellect is stirred and knowledge is increased. We thank Thee for the institution which this night is inaugurated in our city. We praise Thee that such an agency has been created to minister to the growth and culture of mind. May this library which is here opened be a great means of promoting intelligence and virtue among our people. May those who in future years shall dwell here receive information, men-

tal quickening and moral and spiritual refreshment from this fountain of knowledge. May truth be spread and error be dissipated by means of it. In promoting intelligence may this library also promote righteousness.

"We thank Thee for the old library which has so long furnished mental nutriment to so many persons in this city. We praise Thee for those who established and have conducted it, and for its good history now closed. We pray for those who are identified in any way with the new library. Bless its officers and bless all who have the care of this great interest of literature and virtue. Bless this assembly. We thank Thee for the great audience assembled to participate in the inauguration of this great institution in this great city. Bless Thy servant in what he shall say to us in the oration that is to follow. Bless all who shall speak to us to-night, and may their words be helpful to the cause which has convened us together and be profitable to us. Pardon, we beseech of Thee, our sins. And graciously accept and save us for the Redeemer's sake. Amen."

A chorus choir, under the leadership of Mr. T. F. Morrill, rendered an appropriate selection, after which Mr. Samuel J. Macdonald said:

"The Board of Trustees of the Free Public Library of the city of Newark were appointed somewhat more than a year ago. Since their institution their labors have been both exacting and arduous, and it is with feelings of relief as well as of exultation that they are now able to see an end of their labors, and to present to the people of this city this noble institution, which their means have furnished. The Board of Trustees have asked the citizens of Newark to meet them here to-night that they may give to those whom they serve an account of their stewardship. They rejoice that they are able to look the people honestly in the eye, and, without equivocation or reservation, say that they have done their best. The institution which, as the fruit of their labors, they now present you, will speak for itself. It is for you to say if it justifies our efforts and commends our labors.

"The history of free libraries in the State of New Jersey is brief. In 1884 an act was passed by the State Legislature, mainly through the efforts of Assemblyman Prall, of Paterson, under which the first Free Public Library was established in that city. The success of this institution, its instant and grateful appreciation by the people of

that city, induced public spirited citizens of this and other cities to agitate the subject. Additional necessary legislation was secured, and two years ago the people of this city were given an opportunity to declare by their votes whether they would submit to an exceedingly slight addition to their taxes in order that a Free Public Library might be established among them for the benefit of themselves and their children. Their vote was practically unanimous in the affirmative, and now they are enabled to see the fruits of their magnanimity and far-seeing public spirit. This institution, which this evening is thrown open to their use and enjoyment, will prove of incalculable benefit to them, its influences will extend to their children and each succeeding generation, and all good shall flow from it in ever widening streams.

"The labors of the Board of Trustees have seemed slow to many impatient citizens. They have not been hasty, it is true. The Board felt that their true policy was to make haste slowly; to be sure rather than unduly eager, and to be safe rather than swift. It is with great confidence, therefore, that they now meet the citizens of Newark face to face, and ask them to inspect and pronounce upon this work. When they have done so, when they have—as we confidently trust they will—declared all good, then let them make the institution thoroughly their own, let them use its advantages to the fullest, let them make its resulting blessings innumerable and inestimable."

Mr. Cortlandt Parker was then introduced as the orator of the evening.

MR. PARKER'S ORATION.

"A library—it is in itself joy, profit, education—in distress, consolation, in prosperity, peace. A public library dispenses these blessings to a whole community. A *free* public library gives them as God gives sunlight and dew and rain, 'without money and without price,' to the just and the unjust, to the poor and to the rich, the deserving and the undeserving, to 'whosoever will.'

"The opening of such a library—the inauguration of such an institution, is the occasion which, to-night, brings us together. We come, the people who do it, who add its maintenance willingly to the price we pay for municipal conveniences and advantages, to celebrate our present success, to extend mutual congratulations, to publish to all

our anticipations. We shall go hence to see and admire the beautiful edifice hard by—its attractive accommodations—its invitations through all its rooms to peaceful intellectual enjoyments. We are here to think backward, how much our city and we ourselves have lost in not sooner having what we now attain, to dwell in thought and hopefully upon what may be its outgrowth. And in view of all we are here to thank the public men to whom we are beholden, our mayor, the trustees of the enterprise, the gentlemen of the Common Council, the trustees of the Newark Library Association, the architect to whose skill and taste the city owes this great addition to its architectural ornaments, and who has evinced his talents there in a manner which links his name forever with that of our beautiful city.

"One of the singularities of heredity is the fact that localities so often preserve from generation to generation the imprint of the character of their first settlers. I have come to think that this is especially true where these settlers were Puritans. It is somewhat strange, too. There is little that is attractive in Puritan characteristics. There is much to respect, much to inspire a wholesome awe, but not so much to love. And one might think that succeeding generations would slip away from likeness to the ascetic, the energetic, the precise, exacting ways of Puritan ancestry, and readily adopt the style and methods of thought and action of gentler people. But New England on a large scale and Newark and Orange on a smaller, exhibit still the ancestral qualities of energy, economy and self advancement, and in religion the tendency to the Puritanic and the over-solemn. Orthodoxy, it is true, has not prospered in New England; why, we have not time now to explain. On the other hand, New England has had a love for books and literary culture which has not characterized the Puritanic stock of New Jersey. It is due, I suppose, to the early establishment of Harvard College, and to the tastes there created and cultivated. Probably had the College of New Jersey been retained where it was established, here, upon our upper green, Newark might have been more like Boston. The absence of other than religious literary culture, has left to our city the hard thinking, shrewdness and strong sense of the race, unadorned, as elsewhere. We have remained nearer to the Puritan model. Literary tastes have not, as a rule, distinguished Puritanism. They were almost despised as semi-effeminate. I am afraid that I am too correct in saying that it has been too much so with us.

"Not that we ever neglected education. From the first, the education of all was a favorite principle with our Puritan ancestors, those 'first settlers' for whose ancient tombstones and place of interment we of this generation have exhibited such honorable and tender filial respect!

"And since, to find a Puritan was to find a friend of public education—the education mostly of common schools. It was reserved to the present generation to seek, as a community, for more. Now, we can proudly invite any to surpass, and can almost challenge a rival in the extent and perfection of the instruction in our public schools. 'The busy world a thousand ways is hurrying by, and never stays' to witness the Commencements of Newark's High School, to listen to the orations and theses pronounced and read, year by year, by its graduates, but the few who do, know that in them is exhibited what is really the greatest glory of our growing city, the perfection of the education and culture conferred by our public schools.

"All the same, Newark has been actually culpable in the matter of public libraries. She has never had but one. True, when I came here a boy, I found a Young Men's Society, an institution for debate, declamation and composition, attached to which was a library of perhaps five hundred or a thousand volumes. It had been a successful club. When we, that is, the present Mr. Justice Bradley, the late Secretary Frelinghuysen, a classmate long gone named Edward Cook, and myself first found it, it consisted, so far as attendance went, of but three other members, and its learned and exciting discussions took place by the light of two dipped candles in the school room of old Nathan Hedges, resonant during the day time with the echoes of the ruler strokes and resultant 'cries of the wounded,' for which his discipline was famous. It was a grand accession, ours, to the numbers of this well intended society, and it was not a bad one in quality, either as was very soon proved. For this association in the course of a year, numbered its members by the hundred, migrated to the largest public hall then known in Newark, and found its debates attended by crowds of interested auditors. It is interesting, too, to observe the effect of that society, and, doubtless, in part, of its library, upon the history of Newark. Among its members besides those mentioned, were Samuel H. Pennington, Lewis C. Grover, Abraham Coles, Judge Martin Ryerson, Chief Justice Edward W. Whelpley, William

F. Day, Stephen Congar, H. Newton Congar, a brother, Joseph Congar, Silas Merchant, James Hague, William E. Layton, Theodore P. Howell, James B. Hay and scores more, less known to fame, yet still locally well known, and most influential in their day and generation. I suppose that the man who had most to do with the charter of the city of Newark, in its various renewals and remodellings, was Stephen Congar, now, if still living, as I hope, a citizen of a comparatively obscure town I believe, in the State of Michigan. Enough of this ancient and honorable Young Men's Society ; extravagance in books proved its ruin. Bye and bye it became involved, was sold out and vanished.

"The churches had, several of them, small denominational parish libraries, nearer public free libraries than any others, for they involved no money payment. Sunday schools, too, of course, had each their libraries. But this was all on a small scale, and the books were generally exclusively religious, or at least what might be called goody-goody. There was the 'circulating library,' too, of Benjamin Olds, kept in his book store, and as a sort of accessory to it. And though it was rather too full of fiction, the selection of books in it was quite passable. Still all these were collections of insignificant character. Not till 1848 did a public library exist in Newark. Think of it, one hundred and eighty years after its settlement.

"This institution, the Newark Library Association, was the result of the efforts, mainly of one man ; a business man, a modest man, who had no gift of eloquence, and who made no pretension to literary eminence. But there are two institutions here in Newark, the two which give it all the literary distinction it deserves, the Newark Library Association and the New Jersey Historical Society, neither of which, I feel safe in saying, would have existed but for him. They were his pet projects. He was ready in Church and State in every good work. But these he originated, and he brought to their furtherance such zeal, patience and persistency, not only in producing, but in carrying them on, that his friends have the right to claim them as his creations.

"The formation of the Library association was a favorite object with him. If he did not draw the charter, he procured its preparation. He helped to get it passed. It was a stock company. He, mainly, procured the subscriptions for it. The first stockholders numbered something more than three hundred ; only about one-fifth

of them survive. Of its first Board of Directors, not one now lives, excepting Jacob D. Vermilye and John Chadwick, neither of them for many years residents of Newark. But they were among our most notable citizens of that day. William Rankin, President; Samuel I. Prime, Vice-President; William A. Whitehead, Secretary; Jacob D. Vermilye, Treasurer; John H. Stephens, William B. Kinney, Beach Vanderpool, Samuel Meeker, James B. Pinneo, Jeremiah C. Garthwaite, William R. Inslee, John Chadwick and Frederick T. Frelinghuysen, Directors.

"I feel as if I ought briefly to describe these gentlemen. We live so fast nowadays—and men, when they die, drop like stones into the waters. They close over them and they are forthwith forgotten. How better can I employ the time allotted me? William Rankin was at that time reputed to be the second man in point of wealth among us. He was a successful hat manufacturer, already far advanced in years, what is called a self-made man (as if any true man is not in a sense self-made). He was without the advantage of early education, but he loved literature and art, and showed it, among other ways, by the education he gave his children. One of these, a distinguished and useful minister, has lately gone to his reward; another, inheriting his father's love of doing good and his interest in the same institution, successor, too, in its presidency, is still among us, while there are grandchildren here, distinguished in State as well as Church, treasuring his memory, though not carrying down his name.

"A very notable person was the first Vice-President, Rev. Samuel Irenaus Prime, D. D., a gentleman of highest distinction both in literature and in his useful and venerable profession, though even more so as a leading editor and manager of a great public journal. Diminutive in stature, but with a briskness of gait, a remarkable vivacity of thought and speech, a resistless *bonhomme* which made him a universal favorite, a quiet, quaint humor, perhaps more effective because less expected from one of his cloth, always ready with heart, hand and voice to aid in any public charity or scheme for public usefulness, he was a most valuable citizen, not half so much valued, in our busy strife for material things, as he deserved to be, but, spite of that, always on hand when wanted. It is a great regret that he did not always live among us. He removed away many

years ago, and within a short time past has gone to his reward in heaven.

"I am sure that this audience would accuse me of false delicacy did I fail to name and speak more in detail of the man to whom I have already referred as the founder of the Newark Library, without whom, if it ever existed, it would have been postponed for many years, William A. Whitehead. Many of you remember his handsome and dignified face and form, his regular and punctual attendance at his business and public duties, his winning smile, his constant identification with every charitable public project. The columns of the Daily Advertiser for many years bear witness to his interest in his native State and native city. With a serene superiority to the love of gain his mind was always busy with plans for public benefit. His researches into the antiquities of New Jersey; his correspondence as the Secretary of the Historical Society; his reports, monthly, to the Daily Advertiser, of the weather, and like matters, were his delight and his amusement, toilsome as his labor upon them really was. He, literally, had no other amusement than this class of work. And it was wonderful how much he accomplished. His careful, regular and methodical habits alone gave him his success.

"He claimed no brilliancy. Nature had given him little more than his love of labor, his enthusiasm in what he undertook. But upon few if upon any could, that grand eulogium be made which came from Divine lips to reward unselfish if even wasteful love, 'She hath done what she could,'

"I would like to speak with equal fullness of others in that first Board of Newark Library trustees. But I must not exceed the limit allotted me. I can only make mention of the somewhat peculiar but notable John H. Stephens, self-taught, yet better read than most of those who are thoroughly educated; of Beach Vanderpool, one of the ablest and honestest men ever among our citizens, and always ready to do his share in any wholesome public enterprise; of William B. Kinney, 'browed like an antique god,' founder of the prosperity of the principal New Jersey journal, a man of rare literary accomplishments and taste, of eloquence upon the platform when he could be forced there, unsurpassed in conversational ability, and, indeed, seldom equaled therein anywhere; of Jeremiah C. Garthwaite, the great church builder, especially re-

nowned for self-sacrificing and persistent devotion to the religious denomination in which he was brought up; of James B. Pinneo and Samuel Meeker, bank presidents both, and men of sterling sense and highest worth; of Jacob D. Vermilye, who in the metropolis has won fortune and fame by the exercise there of the talents and integrity which gave him so much respect and success here, and last of the conspicuous upon the list, of Frederick T. Frelinghuysen, the eloquent advocate and Senator, our most famous citizen, for whose death, hastened as I think, by his life and labors in politics, we have hardly yet ceased to weep. Newark has reason to be proud of such men, and her young people to be grateful for their existence and for their devotion to such a purpose as the founding and maintenance of a public library among us. And they were succeeded in their posts by a long line of worthies, leading men among us. The present Board, who have done much to forward this culmination of library promotion, deserve especial commendation. Perhaps we may be allowed particularly among these to thank Messrs. L. Spencer Goble, Frederick Frelinghuysen, George A. Halsey, F. W. Ricord and John W. Taylor, members of the committee having charge, for their efforts in bringing about the event which we this evening publicly inaugurate. These directors of the Library association were successful, too. The number of books upon the library shelves increased from 1,900 in 1849 to 28,264 in 1888. The number of books taken out to read annually from some 20,000 in 1851 to 33,000 thirty years after. The funds of the institution, which were \$14,663 in 1849, have through judicious investment aiding subscription increased till it is to-day the owner of property worth some \$90,000.

"And may we not ascribe this needed public *free* library largely to the influence of those who have maintained, protected and pushed this project of 1847? It could not when originated, be *free*. Its authors were none of them then rich enough to endow it. The plan of stock subscription, putting each share so low as to make the ownership popular was the only one then feasible. Yet this scheme, with its attendant feature, that as ownership of shares increased, annual subscription diminished till it ceased, and the invitation to all to make use of its treasures at a cost so small as to be almost nothing, made the library all but free. And the taste for reading

which the facility afforded stimulated, contributed largely, who can doubt, to the vote by which the public laid the burden of a library upon itself, and in such measure as that if it be for a few years continued, the Free Public Library of Newark must be famous.

"Yes; the work of the Newark Library Association is done. It can not only claim to have, however unintentionally, produced the public opinion which originates this new departure, but it gives to the enterprise the benefit of this beautiful building, the impetus which must spring from it and from the conveniences it provides. Its architect has done well, indeed. Where else can be found a structure of like character more creditable? Certainly there is not in this State one to equal it. In no other that I have visited is there any to surpass it.

"The organization of the corporation ought to be maintained. A possible future will thus be provided against. Public opinion is not unchangeable. Nay, it sometimes may, without disrespect, be called capricious. This building should be held and rented. It should not for some time, if ever, be sold; of course, never except to this new enterprise. Then, if the public drop the library, the original association may resume its active duty. Let not this caution be forgotten. Some day the city may wish to buy this edifice, but I trust it will not be too soon. It is better every way that they should delay it, so that the library can be more rapidly increased. For what is most desirable, as I think, is rapidly to gather a large collection of splendid, well chosen books.

"Think of what other cities can show. Baltimore reports 135,500 books, Boston 710,000, Brooklyn 130,000, Chicago 170,000, with the Newberry Library just inaugurated having an endowment of no less than \$2,000,000. New York has 880,000 books, saying nothing of the elegant Lenox Library. Cincinnati comes nearer to Newark, reporting only about 95,000 volumes, 70,000 of them, however, in its public library, while Newark has in its Library association only about 30,000 volumes, with 7,000 or so in the Historical Society, and certain small additional libraries attached to various associations, and their use, of course, belonging only to their members.

"The provisions of the law under which this Public Free Library is established are liberal in the extreme, and promise much for the future. The people having voted to have such a library, the law

directs the taxing power of the municipality to raise three mills on the dollar from every taxpayer upon the valuation of the last assessment for its annual support. It will readily be seen that the Purchasing Committee will not have a sinecure. They will be compelled every year to increase the library largely, and a great opportunity is given for discreet, interesting and profitable purchase. The law then incorporates the seven trustees, of whom the Mayor must always be one, and by permitting invites contributions and endowments. Evidently the proper policy is first to rent, as has been done, and year by year for several years increase the number of books. When a liberal sufficiency of books is attained a share of the yearly income should be husbanded and funded, till enough is gathered with which to buy this building and make it the property of this corporate satellite to the municipality of Newark.

"I can hardly exaggerate the delight or the difficulty of the task of those who are to fill the shelves of this noble library. The institution is to provide for the wants and the tastes first of people generally, next of such a people as ours, a manufacturing people, then for the nationalities of which it is composed, then for professional men, for scholars, and those who seek to be authors. The immediate expenditure should have all these things in mind, and each annual outlay should be upon the same principles. And in the selection of books constant attention must be paid to present appetites, and likewise to their right education, else on the one side reading will be deterred, and on the other it will be without proper benefit. The men who are to perform this task must be no ordinary persons. They must have an intimate knowledge of books, must be enthusiasts in literature and at the same time must be without hobbies, and free from everything that characterizes the crank. And they must be industrious watchmen of authors and their works, abroad, even more than at home, that they may keep pace with this excited and progressive age, whose inventions and theories and discoveries so crowd upon each other.

"I have exhausted my time and must hasten to close this crude address, the result of snatches of time fairly stolen from pressing duties. The invitation to take part in the ceremonies of this evening was one which I could not refuse. For in my view it is a grand occasion. It is the inauguration of a new effort for universal ed-

ucation. It is the act of the people for the intellectual and moral profit of themselves and their posterity. It is the first opening of a free library among us. Our old library was virtually free, its founders said. But it was not fully so, and little as was the stipend, those who used it were enjoying a privilege given them by others and for which they paid. This library is their own, its use is their right, and no donation either. In truth, its name is hardly exact. It is not the public Free Library, it is the People's Library, and such should be its name. Convenient and luxurious in its appointments as it is and may be, loaded as may be its shelves with usefulness and delight, they are for the enjoyment of all. Men should use such rights more readily and with greater appetite than privileges given or for which they individually pay dues. It must be so. It is upon this belief that the scheme of this institution is founded

"And I cannot close in any way so satisfactory to myself as by using the very words in which the good old library, from whose ashes this new one, Phoenix-like, arises, was ushered into public notice forty years ago, and by reciting the noble poem which closed the exercises of that evening.

"Said the Secretary of that association then:

"We open this hall to the inhabitants of the city of Newark, as a place where all, of every class and condition, may increase their intellectual stores, by participating in the treasures of the learned and the wise, which from time to time will be brought before them; where literature, in all its varied forms, will ever we trust, wear the most engaging features, and where young and old may find constantly recurring inducements to a more thorough cultivation of the mental powers with which they are endowed.

"We open it to our artisans and our professional men, as a place where the wonders of nature and of art, the mysteries and revelations of science, the practical bearing of important discoveries, and the value of novel inventions, may in turn be presented for their admiration, their instruction, or their investigation.

"We open it to all as a place of rational entertainment; believing that 'to everything there is a season,' and that the occasional relaxation from mental and bodily toil which man requires, will be here improved to highly useful and ennobling purposes; that music and poetry, painting and sculpture, will here combine to calm the

passions, exalt the affections, refine the taste and enliven the imagination.

"We open it in the hope and confident belief that notwithstanding the varied uses for which it is designed, nothing will ever be heard or witnessed within its walls which will not tend to inculcate a high-toned morality, and to uphold the honor and majesty of that Being of whom it is said, 'unless He build the house, they labor in vain who build it.' Worse than useless would prove our undertaking if aught should ever transpire here to affect injuriously the moral or religious condition of the community. It is, therefore, in strict accordance with the spirit of the resolution by which the Board of Directors accepted the donation of a valuable Bible as the *foundation* of the library, so that we shall strive to make this hall subservient to the moral as well as to the intellectual improvement of all frequenting it.

"We welcome you, therefore, to a place which we hope will ever be to you attractive, as well from the healthful influence it will exercise, as from the new sources of enjoyment and instruction it may offer."

"Such were the words of welcome from this worthy institution, and they were followed by an ode, from the pen of Mrs. W. B. Kinney,* mother of a living American poet, of whom the nation is proud.

" 'Spirit of living Truth,
 Fresh in immortal youth,
 Yet aged as Eternity!
 Come at the fervid calls
 Of hearts that, ever seeking after thee,
 To thy great purpose dedicate these walls.
 Come, and spread here thy broad and beaming wings,
 Where, in thy name, the Muse her humble tribute brings.

" 'Spirit of Art, divine;
 This edifice shall be a shrine
 Where thy true worshippers may kneel.
 Standing sublime in Learning's cause,
 The impress of thy mighty laws
 Its form majestic will reveal,
 While the same glorious Sun shall make it bright,
 Or the same Moon shall gild it with her light,
 As have for ages shed their beams upon

*Since deceased.

" 'The hallowed ruins of the Parthenon;
And Wisdom's goddess here shall own
All that approach to seek her lore,
No less, than where was raised the throne
Which first her votaries knelt before.

" 'Knowledge shall here unfold
Her 'treasures new and old.'
Science lay open her mysterious heart,
That searching eyes its inmost depths may see;
And Helicon's pure fount its streams impart
To all who thirst for living poesy.
These opening gates will languages unlock,
And free shall flow old Homer's tide of song,
As when, in ancient days, from Horeb's rock
Gushed limpid waters for the eager throng.

" 'Britannia's bards shall dwell beneath this classic dome
And visit - Fancy's dreams to tell -
The laborer's humble home;
And History's undying page
Here the eventful past shall state;
Or our brief present to a future age
Perchance relate.
Toil in these cheering walls forgot,
The weary soul refreshed shall be,
And riches wait to bless the lot
Of patient Industry.
Wealth, such as shaping intellect hath wrought
From the imperishable mines of Thought.

" 'Spirit of Eloquence, whose voice
Made Academic groves rejoice
In Plato's days of old,
We dedicate to *thee* this hall;
Here, ever at thy trumpet call
May truth again grow bold,
And startle error from his secret hold.

" 'Spirit of Science, here inspect
The mysteries of Philosophy;
Or with thy telescope direct
To starry wonders in the sky.
Spirit of Music, here awake,
This dome with airs melodious fill,
And every listening spirit make
With rapture thrill.

" 'Spirit of pure Religion, deign
 Within this temple to abide;
 For Art and Science build in vain
 Unless *thou* o'er their works preside.
 The crumbling touch of Time
 Lays low the edifice sublime;
 But if thy footprints there are found,
 The spot whereon it stood "is holy ground,"
 And every tribute offered there to *thee*
 The wreck of nature shall survive,
 And in the hearts of God and Angels live
 Among the records of Eternity.' "

The oration was followed by a selection by the choir.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction, Mr. W. N. Barringer, was presented and delivered the following remarks:

"Newark has a Free Public Library. I never felt so proud, I never felt so like saying I am glad my lot is cast in Newark as I am now, when I can lift up my voice and say, Newark has a Free Public Library. We are to dedicate and set apart the new building on West Park street, with all its facilities. It is there for all time, and we present it now to you from the hands of the Board of Trustees, who have wrought and toiled for over a year. We present it to you as your just inheritance, and I ask you to foster and care for it. What a responsibility is yours as citizens of Newark and owners of this Library! I ask you to realize that responsibility. What a privilege you have! What will not this Library be as an educator; what will it not be to our schools? What is it not to each and all of you? It brings to you the thought, the history, the biography, the discovery, the universal progress of humanity. I ask you to receive it and care for it."

Mr. Macdonald then introduced Mr. Frank P. Hill, Librarian of the new library, who said:

"Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen—As you very well know the librarian is expected to work rather than talk. Were it otherwise, the presence here this evening of such a large audience, evincing, as it does, a lively interest in the success and prosperity of our new institution would be a great inspiration. Mindful of my brother librarians who are to speak this evening, I shall pass over the subject of public libraries in general and confine my remarks to a consideration of a few of the rules of our own library "

The librarian then entered into an explanation of the rules governing users of the library; continuing, he said:

"We have with us this evening several gentlemen, prominent in the library profession, who are prepared to give us some interesting and practical talks on library matters. I feel sure we shall be benefited by what they have to say.

"The city of Worcester, Mass., justly boasts of its many fine public buildings, but there is one which in the estimation of the people stands at the head, namely, the Public Library, and we are fortunate in having its librarian with us to-night, for certainly no man is better qualified to tell us of 'The practical value of Public Libraries' than is Samuel Swett Green, whom I now take pleasure in presenting to you."

MR. GREEN'S REMARKS.

"Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen—Many persons seem to think that public libraries are merely storehouses of novels and stories.

"That is not the case, however.

"Still, if it were true, these institutions would have an important place to fill in communities.

"Novels and stories play an important part in the cultivation of the imagination, in awakening the feelings, in exerting a healthful moral influence and in affording rational enjoyment.

"The word which should guide authorities in deciding what course to pursue in regard to placing in libraries literature of the kind mentioned is "discrimination" and not "prohibition."

"But public libraries are not merely storehouses of novels. The main purpose of their establishment is to afford facilities for instruction. The citizens of a community need not apologize for affording opportunities for study. It is well to encourage the acquisition of knowledge for its own sake, and without regard to its practical applications.

"When, however, I stand before an audience made up as this is to-night of men and women who are engaged in active pursuits I like to show that a public library is of great value to persons whose lives are spent in doing every day duties.

"A farmer who takes an agricultural paper and who reads books

which treat of various subjects connected with his occupation does his work better and finds farming more profitable than he would otherwise do.

"It is well for men, whatever their employments, to add to the teachings of experience and instruction received from workmen whom they are serving the experiences of other men engaged in similar occupations as found recorded in books.

"It is evident that work in a shop will be done more intelligently and that returns in money will be increased, if the proprietors, foreman and workmen make it their business to keep themselves abreast of the times in a knowledge of the literature of the kind of work carried on in the shop.

"I know of one large establishment which employed a literary expert, a few years ago, to go over the transactions of learned societies and sets of periodicals, with reference to finding in them anything that would be useful to it in carrying on its business. The same expert seeks every year for supplementary information that may be useful to his employers. I have little doubt that the concern which thus keeps on the watch to find out the results of investigation and experience is doing much to add to its prosperity.

"A few days ago a young man from a shop asked me to give him a book in which he could find out how to make a chuck which would enable him to turn a ball of ivory into a many sided piece.

"Books on the lathe and other volumes were given to him, but he did not find what he wanted, and I took hold of the matter and soon found for him "Bazley's Notes on the Epicycloidal Cutting Frame," which book gave him the desired information.

"Even more recently I received a letter from a Worcester boy, who was engaged in work in a neighboring city, asking for a list of books treating of the subjects of carding and spinning cotton.

"He wrote thanking me for the list sent, and announced that he intended to make himself master of all the books about cotton that he could get hold of.

"An accomplished librarian like Mr. Hill will find a large amount of work to do of the kind of which examples have just been given, and he will experience great pleasure in attending to it. It is needless to add that work of this kind is of great practical advantage to a community.

"Allow me to refer for an elaborate discussion of the value of such work to a community, and for a list of questions of the most practical kind which have been answered in the library which I represent to a paper which I read in St. Louis, last May, and which has been published in the Library Journal in the Proceedings of the American Library Association.

"I should like to speak to-night of the contribution to good morals made in a community by a well managed public library. Time is lacking, however.

"I cannot close after coming so far to be with you to-night, without extending to you a cordial greeting from the State of Massachusetts.

"That State is dotted over with public libraries. I come to you particularly as the representative of Worcester county, with its forty public libraries, and of the city of Worcester, which has public libraries which contain 250,000 volumes.

"Massachusetts and New Jersey have stood side by side in war and in peace, and together have passed the torch of enlightenment from one generation to another.

"Massachusetts can never forget how New York and New Jersey came to her aid in the Revolutionary war.

"New Jersey had not the same grievances as Massachusetts, yet she came manfully to her support, with the knowledge that her territory would be traversed by both armies and furnish them with battle grounds.

"Massachusetts has her Bunker Hill and Lexington and Concord. She has Dorchester Heights and Boston. New Jersey has her Princeton and Trenton and Morristown.

"I come to you to-night from the heart of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, a heart which is warm with interest and sympathy when such an educational movement as the one we are inaugurating this evening is celebrated.

"God speed you in your undertaking."

After singing by the choir, Librarian Hill read a letter from Rev. Dr. William Prall, the "Father of the New Jersey Law:"

" ALBANY, N. Y., October 10, 1889.

" DEAR MR. HILL:—Permit me to extend through you to the Board of Trustees of the Free Public Library of Newark, my hearty thanks for their kind invitation to be present at the opening exercises of the Library, Wednesday, October 16th, inst. I regret exceedingly that my engagements are such that I can not be with them and you.

"It is a matter of great congratulation when a free city of the United States erects a free institution of learning in its limits. It is only by such means that the bulwarks of liberty can be preserved, only under cover of such that the battle (which, even now, is raging on our continent) with ignorance, vice and superstition can be won.

"Personally, as the author of the Free Public Library act and the first president of the Paterson Library, it delights me greatly to see another of its children start into life, and yet how strange it is ! When I introduced my bill into the Assembly of New Jersey some years ago complaint was made that the people of the various cities did not want to have an additional burden of taxation hanging over them. So I had to limit the operation of the act (as originally passed) to one year.

"You cannot imagine how pleased I was to hear that the law had been re-enacted and placed on the statute book of the State forever.

"For this change of view the lesson of the Paterson Library placed in operation under your wise and able counsel, as first librarian, is the undoubted cause. I congratulate you, also, personally.

"With the assurance of my esteem and consideration, I am, yours very truly,

" WILLIAM PRALL.

" MR. FRANK P. HILL,

" Librarian Free Public Library, Newark, N. J."

Mr. Hill introduced Librarian Steiner, saying : "In order to become somewhat familiar with the systems in use in other libraries, the Trustees of our new Library visited the cities of New York, Worcester, Boston and Baltimore. Much useful information was obtained, and at the latter place the Trustees were very favorably impressed with the work accomplished by the branches connected with the Public Library.

"The system seemed complete, and we shall be pleased to have the librarian tell us something further as to the utility of Branch Libraries.

"I take pleasure in introducing to you Lewis H. Steiner, librarian of the Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore, Md."

MR. STEINER'S REMARKS.

"Beyond all question this is a reading age. The citizen in these United States who cannot read belongs to the minority. The school-master no longer confines his instructions to the walls of the college or seminary, but extends them throughout the length and breadth of the land, and the children of the humblest as well as of the wealthiest are invited to profit by his ministrations, without money and without price.

"The daily newspaper furnishes an amount of information to a reading public, wholly unknown even half a century ago. The events of the day, the discoveries in science which follow each other with such marvelous rapidity—these are now brought to every fireside, so that it is a disgrace not to be moderately well acquainted, at least in a superficial way, with their extent and significance. An appetite for reading has manifested itself everywhere, and demands food, either of the best or worst kind, being susceptible of cultivation so as to be satisfied only with the former, or contenting itself with the latter when untrained and ill-advised.

"The instruction of the schools needs something more than what is secured in the class room to bring youth to that condition of cultivation which will insure the highest grade of useful citizenship. The ministration of books must be invoked to increase knowledge and widen the sphere of mental activity. And this is not the discovery of our age. Centuries ago an ardent lover of books wrote: "These are the teachers who instruct us without rods and stripes, without taunts or anger, without gifts or money; who are not asleep when we approach them, and do not refuse to give answer when we interrogate them; who do not chide when we err, or make sport when we show our ignorance." Still it is one of the glories of this age that communities deeply feel the necessity of bringing these teachers, with their instructions, to the door of every citizen, offering to him the advantages which, in olden times, were the peculiar property alone of the so called scholar. Libraries, or collections of books, are now felt to be a necessity in every community, whether large or small. They are no longer confined to a privileged class, or to those citizens who can pay a stated sum for their use, but are now,

whether created and supported by public taxation or private benefaction, one of the essential features of nineteenth century civilization and culture, a practical result of the well recognized conclusion that intelligent citizens make up a total of wealth and possible energy, not to be reckoned in dollars and cents, but in wondrous capability to grapple with the problems of the age and to secure a solution of their hidden meaning.

"I congratulate you upon the completion of your handsome home for a Free Public Library, which, with a good nucleus of books and, under the wise superintendence of your energetic and experienced librarian, may be confidently looked upon as the focus of great benefit to your community. Having once experienced its utility, you will soon find that it is thenceforward indispensable. Not content with whatever stores of learning or pleasure it may now contain, it is not a rash prediction for me to make that you will demand their increase until you can find upon its shelves answers to all the queries which the inquisitive human mind may fabricate, and a thousand forms of solace to the weary laborer and mechanic, as well as to the citizen of wealth and refinement. Having recognized the necessity of establishing this Free Library, so long as enterprise and activity shall mark your prosperous city—so long as inventive genius shall establish and conduct within its limits huge factories, sending their products far and wide, so long as its cultivated homes are occupied by intelligent men and gentle women, so long shall this survive as a monument to the spirit which gave it birth, an honor to the city and an object of honest pride to every thoughtful man, woman or child among its citizens.

"Recognizing then, the priceless value of a Free Library, a pertinent question presses forward for solution—how can its advantages be brought within the grasp of the greatest number. Although it may be looked upon as a centre of pleasure and useful information, still distance may militate against its use by many whose days are devoted to labor, and whom fatigue at the going down of the sun may keep from flocking to its doors. Provision must be made to place its treasures within the reach of the latter. Something more is still needed to make your enterprise thoroughly and completely a success. The planet, however brilliant in itself, needs satellites that shall derive their rich supplies of light from its abundant store-house, and distribute this to those in want who are far distant from its bril-

liant centre. In other words, you need branch libraries, and these, I am happy to learn, have been considered by its management an essential feature in the plan of this People's University, now opened to the citizens of Newark. Let me use the few minutes placed at my disposal on this occasion, to plead for the utility of these branches, in order that the movement here inaugurated shall redound to the greatest good of the greatest number, and that, so far as a prudent employment of the public funds may permit, every part of the city may hail this day as the beginning of an era of profitable instruction and intellectual pleasure to all its residents.

"The Branch Library is intended to furnish as nearly as possible to every citizen the advantages of the great Library of which it forms a part, either through the possession of a well-selected collection of books on its own shelves, or by bringing the books desired by the reader from the shelves of the central Library, and also by furnishing the advantages of a well-supplied reading-room. The neighborhood where it is placed will speedily recognize it as a focus of intellectual pleasure and profit. Its proximity to his home will tempt the weary laborer to its rooms for solace after the day's task has been performed; its books so easily obtained will be sought for by his wife and children. All will find a cordial welcome, which will make it a formidable rival to the places of dissipation that so often tempt one away from the protection of home, to his own great injury. Instructive periodicals, cyclopædias filled with intelligible answers to the innumerable queries which daily clamor for answer, scientific papers presenting in simple language the discoveries which so frequently change the whole character of our industries, even humorous magazines and weeklies with their playful representations of the comic side of life; all these and many others have their place in the rooms of such a Library. Whatever may instruct, interest or even amuse the tired brain will also rest the wearied body, and serve at the same time to add to the knowledge and increase the happiness of its visitors. The person in charge of such a Branch Library becomes a local mentor for the neighborhood, to whom old and young speedily learn to go with their questions, and hesitate not to interrogate on subjects that may have puzzled them during the day.

"But the advantages of a Branch Library are not confined to its visitors during the hours spent by them within its walls. These are often induced to secure, through its assistance, such books as

may best suit their intellectual needs, to be used at home. These may be works of fiction, well calculated to relieve the strain of the day and bring peace and pleasure to the reader, or agreeable amusement to his family in the evening hours. Or, the lives of the great and good may show him how others have struggled with difficulties and fought their way to success. Or, the pages of history may lead him to find out the wondrous story of peoples who have lived and successfully worked out the problems of their existence. Or, the teachings of practical science may excite an earnest longing to become acquainted with the contribution it is daily making for the comfort and advancement of the race. Or, the pages of poetry may beguile his thoughts from the dull realism of life to higher and nobler deeds.

"Well-selected books on the shelves of such a library, or secured through its agency, carry with them a blessing to the homes of the reader that can not be expressed in words. He ceases to be, while reading them, a mere weary toiler in the body politic. He ceases to complain of his wealthy neighbor, because he finds that he is his equal in the possession of the wealth which great minds have enshrined in letters, and acquires the riches of that contentment that always awaits the lover of books. Because he becomes a wiser man, he also becomes a better citizen, and can be more relied upon in the day when his country may need the services of its good citizens to protect it from dangers from without or from within.

"It is, however, to the young—the rising generation—that the Branch Library proves most useful—and especially is this the case to those whose opportunities for education have been limited. Within their reach, near their own homes, it brings the opportunities of which they were deprived when taken by stern necessity from the culture of the school. It substitutes for the living teacher the tuition of books. It gently attracts them to the treasures of the printed page, and causes them to supplement the little they may have learned at school with what the latter furnishes, and so they grow up to be well informed men and women, with cultured heads and sympathetic hearts. With enlarged views and increased appetite for learning, they rapidly appropriate the contents of the books obtained from the Branch, and ambitiously long for the treasures contained in the great central Library. The one has been the means for exciting the appetite, which the other is more especially intended to satisfy with

